

Message Text

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SUBJ: PROPOSED BICENTENNIAL EXHIBITION AT MANEGE

REF: MOSCOW 12815

1. EMBOFF MET AT OUR REQUEST SEPTEMBER 11 WITH G. K. OGANESYAN, DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN EXHIBITS AT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, TO DISCUSS US BICENTENNIAL EXHIBIT PROPOSAL.

2. OGANESYAN HAD NOT YET RECEIVED AID-MEMOIRE FROM EITHER MFA OR EMBASSY, WHICH HAD SENT COPY TO CHAMBER THREE DAYS EARLIER. ENGLISH COPY WAS TRANSLATED ORALLY AND LEFT WITH OGANESYAN. HE FIRST ASKED IF A REPLY HAD BEEN RECEIVED FROM MFA. HE ALSO WANTED TO KNOW WHO WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE US EXHIBIT IN THE USG AND IN THE EMBASSY. AND HE ASKED FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE CONTENTS OF THE EXHIBIT.

3. OGANESYAN SAID HE VERY MUCH DOUBTED THAT THE MANEGE WOULD BE POSSIBLE: (A) HE SAID IT ONLY HAS 5,000 SQUARE METERS OF EXHIBIT SPACE; (B) HE CLAIMED IT HAS NOT BEEN AVAILABLE FOR FOREIGN-ORGANIZED EXHIBITS (OGANESYAN SAID BULGARIA AND THE GDR, AMONG OTHERS, HAD BEEN DENIED USE OF THE MANEGE); (C) HE OPINED

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THAT THE EQUIPMENT NECESSARY TO MOUNT SUCH A LARGE EX-

HIBIT WOULD NOT BE PERMITTED IN THIS AREA OF THE CITY;
(D) HE STATED A US BICENTENNIAL EXHIBIT WOULD BE VERY
POPULAR AND CROWD CONTROL IS ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT IN THIS
CONGESTED AREA. OGANESYAN ADDED THAT HE WOULD NOT BE PASSING
FINAL JUDGMENT ON THE AVAILABILITY OF THE MANEGE, BUT
REITERATED HIS SKEPTICISM.

4. OGANESYAN THEN SAID TWO OTHER SITES WERE POSSIBLE
FOR SUCH AN EXHIBIT: (A) VDNKH: HE WILL CONSULT WITH
THE DIRECTORS CONCERNING AVAILABLE SPACE FOR THE JUNE-
JULY 1976 DATES; (B) SOKOLNIKI: ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO
SINGLE PAVILION OF 10,000 SQUARE METERS, THERE ARE SEV-
ERAL ADJACENT BUILDINGS WHICH COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE.
EVEN THOUGH THE BUILDINGS ARE NOW RESERVED FOR THE IN-
DICATED DATES, OGANESYAN SAID THE US EXHIBIT WOULD TAKE
PRIORITY.

5. IF THE EMBASSY RECEIVES A REPLY ON THE MANEGE FROM
MFA, WHICH OGANESYAN SAID WOULD PROBABLY BE RECEIVED
SHORTLY, HE ASKED THAT WE CONTACT HIM, AND HE PROMISED
TO RECIPROCATATE. AFTER THE BASIC QUESTIONS ARE RE-
SOLVED, THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE WILL BE HAPPY TO RE-
CEIVE THE US TECHNICIAN FOR A SITE SURVEY.

6. REGARDING THE SOVIET NATIONAL EXHIBIT PROPOSED FOR
1977 IN THE US, OGANESYAN SAID HE HAD NO DETAILS. HE
WAS AWARE OF THE PROPOSAL, AND PRESUMED THAT THE US
BICENTENNIAL SHOW WOULD BE A SUITABLE EXCHANGE. HE
ASKED IF THE US HAD APPROVED THE SOVIET PROPOSAL.
OGANESYAN SAID HE FELT SURE THE CHAMBER WOULD BE IN
CHARGE OF ORGANIZING THE SOVIET EXHIBIT, BUT ANOTHER
DEPARTMENT WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE SINCE OGANESYAN'S SECTION
ONLY HANDLES FOREIGN EXHIBITS IN THE USSR. OGANESYAN
WILL INQUIRE ABOUT THE SOVIET EXHIBIT AND PROVIDE THE
EMBASSY WITH MORE DETAIL.

7. WHEN HE AGAIN ASKED FOR MORE DETAIL ON THE US PRO-
POSAL, OGANESYAN REMARKED THAT THE US USUALLY ASKS THE
SOVIETS FOR 18 MONTHS ADVANCE NOTICE ON EXHIBITS, BUT
IN THIS CASE THE US WAS ONLY GIVING 10 MONTHS NOTICE.
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AFTER MAKING THIS POINT, OGANESYAN AGAIN PLEDGED THE
CHAMBER'S ASSISTANCE AND SAID HE FELT THE ONLY PROB-
LEM WAS THE MANEGE.

8. IF NO WORD IS RECEIVED ON SOVIET SHOW BY SEPT.
18, EMBASSY WILL CONTACT MFA AND CHAMBER. SUGGEST
USIA/DEPARTMENT ALSO INQUIRE AT SOVEMBASSY ON STATUS
OF SOVIET NATIONAL EXHIBITION.

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